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REPORT OF HEARING

MASSACHUSETTS, GENERAL COURT, COMMITTEE ON CITIES.

Before the Committee on Cities, March 8, 1907
on the Bill, Senate 189

TO PRESERVE THE OLD STATE HOUSE AS AN HISTORIC AND
PATRIOTIC MEMORIAL, AND TO PROHIBIT ITS USE
FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE

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THE OLD STATE HOUSE.

Hazard Stevens.
Mar. 7. 1907

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REPORT OF HEARING

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON CITIES, MARCH 8, 1907,
ON THE BILL, SENATE 189,

TO PRESERVE THE OLD STATE HOUSE AS AN HISTORIC
AND PATRIOTIC MEMORIAL, AND TO PROHIBIT
ITS USE FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

THE COMMITTEE ON CITIES.

Senators WILLIAM J. BULLOCK, *Chairman*, H. P. MORSE, EDWARD W. DIXON,
JOHN LOVELL JOHNSON. Representatives WM. M. BRIGHAM, *House
Chairman*, WM. H. TRUDEL, *Clerk*, GEORGE H. NEWHALL, ALBERT F.
GRANT, DANIEL E. DENNY, HARRY N. STEARNS, HENRY S. CLARK,
MICHAEL J. KENNEY, DANIEL J. McDONALD, WILLIAM J. GRAHAM,
JOSEPH TURNER.

Senator Charles F. Jenney, of Hyde Park, who had offered the bill and the petition of Hon. Winslow Warren and others for the desired legislation to protect the Old State House, opened the hearing by advocating the measure in a few earnest words, and introduced Gen. Hazard Stevens to present the matter in behalf of the petitioners. Senator Jenney said:

I deem it an honor to have been requested to introduce this petition and accompanying bill. The old State House is one of the most valuable, if not the most valuable, of our monuments to patriotism. Such object lessons are of inestimable value. It is not for me, however, to do more than say that I am most heartily in favor of the proposed legislation, and to present to you the

gentleman who will have charge of this hearing. More than twenty years ago it was my privilege to be associated in the Legislature with a man whose ancestors fought to establish this nation, and who has fought to preserve and perpetuate it.

I have great pleasure in presenting to you General Hazard Stevens.

REMARKS OF GENERAL STEVENS.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN: Any one conversant with the history of Massachusetts must be astonished on entering this hall, and beholding this large assemblage of the patriotic societies and people of the Commonwealth met to protest against further desecration of the old State House, and to appeal for the protection of law against encroachments of sordid commercialism,—astonished that any person, or corporation, or commission would desire or would dare to assail this venerable building,—astonished that it should be necessary for the people thus to rise up in its defence. As the scene of so many striking and momentous events in the long struggle for liberty and national independence no other edifice in the country can compare with the old State House,—not Faneuil Hall, nor the Old South Meeting House, nor even Independence Hall in Philadelphia,—hallowed though it be by one great act, the Declaration of Independence. What a procession of colonial governors, judges, law-makers, and Puritan ministers have passed between these venerable walls. Here was witnessed the overthrow of Gov. Sir Edmund Andross in 1689, the first colonial rebellion against royal authority, the precursor and prophecy of the great revolution eighty-six years later. Here Governor Shirley in 1746 planned the capture of Louisburg, forced the reluctant general court to sanction it by the majority of a single vote, and here celebrated the astonishing victory when the rustic army of farmers and fishermen under Pepperell returned triumphant. Here James Otis in 1761 thundered against the writ of assistance and fired the colonial heart even unto rebellion. Here and then the child, Independence, was born, said John Adams. A few years later the eastern front looked down upon the Boston Massacre. In this building Samuel Adams in the name of an

indignant and liberty loving people demanded the removal of the king's soldiers from the town, and royalist governor and British colonels faltered and gave way before his firm and fearless stand. And this was followed by another scene, one not less creditable to the men of that day, to their sense of justice and respect for law, when Captain Preston was tried for his life for the unfortunate slaughter of the citizens, defended by John Adams and Josiah Quincy, and was acquitted.

From its tower, Gage and Howe, the British commanders, watched the first American army under Washington encompassing the town, beheld the batteries thrown up in a single night on Dorchester Heights, now marked by the white monument on the apex of South Boston, and bitterly realized the necessity of surrendering town and harbor, and sailing away with troops and refugees and last vestiges of British rule, never to return.

On the 18th of July following, from the balcony which then projected on the eastern front, the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed to the exulting people of this Commonwealth for the first time. And on the western front on Washington street, was received the Father of his Country in his first presidential progress with all the honors that a grateful and admiring people could bestow upon him who was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.

Twenty-five years ago the Boston city government rescued this venerable building from commercial uses, restored it in a measure to its ancient condition at a cost of \$35,000 and solemnly dedicated it as an historical and patriotic memorial forever. A number of patriotic gentlemen organized the Bostonian Society for the express purpose of administering the building as such memorial, and it was duly entrusted to the charge of the Society, which has since accumulated there a valuable collection of historical relics and a library. Sixty thousand visitors pass through the edifice in a single year, view the halls so rich in historic memories, and examine the collections with the greatest interest and veneration, especially those from the west, the descendants of New Englanders.

Two rooms on the first floor facing Washington street were

not included in the restoration because they were occupied as steamboat and railroad offices under long leases with many years to run. But four years ago these leases expired, the city government refused to renew them, cheerfully relinquishing the large rentals which they would have brought, for the sake of completing the historic memorial, and to that end authorized Mayor Collins to lease these rooms to the Bostonian Society. The preservation and dedication of the venerable edifice now seemed completed and assured as an historic and patriotic memorial forever. Little could Mayor Samuel A. Green, Orator William H. Whitmore, and the civic dignitaries who took part in the dedicatory ceremonies twenty-five years ago,—little could the public spirited Mayor Collins and Board of Aldermen, who vainly sought to complete the work, foresee how soon their dedication would be set at naught, and the building in part prostituted to the uses of a railroad station. For this is what the Boston Transit Commission has already done to the east end, and would ere now have done to the west end of the building had not the spontaneous uprising last spring of the patriotic societies and people represented here to-day and the positive action of his Excellency, Gov. Curtis Guild, stayed its vandal hand, and forced it to relinquish its iconoclastic plans — temporarily at least.

Eight apparently harmless, innocent, little words in the act of its creation authorized the commission “to take public ways and lands without compensation.” No member of the Legislature which passed this act ever supposed for a moment that it empowered the commission to seize possession of and desecrate this ancient monument, this solemnly dedicated memorial, this priceless and most sacred relic of the glorious past. But the commission was troubled by no scruples. It construed the clause above quoted in its widest sense — that the word lands included buildings also. Moreover, it was a law unto itself subject to no authority or control, save only the General Court, and when that body was not in session, absolutely irresponsible, — while the high standing of the members in social, financial and political circles rendered them peculiarly tenacious of their own way, and regardless of requests and protests from the people. Before Mayor Collins added the two west rooms to the charge of the

Bostonian Society the Boston Transit Commission seized possession of the lower story and basement of the venerable historic building, tore out the partition between the Washington street rooms, and occupied the space with clerks, draftsmen, tables, surveying instruments, and all the litter of an engineer's office, and have retained and so used it ever since, and that, too, without paying a cent to the city for space which would readily rent at twelve thousand a year for business purposes. The commission tore out the floor in the east end, driving the Bostonian Society with its library and collections from that story, and replaced it by one several feet higher, thereby impairing the symmetry of the rooms and impairing their historic value; it drove a sidewalk tunnel through the east end, and made continuous openings and doors on this end and along nearly half of the sides, with stairways leading down to the subway depot excavated below. And having thus transformed and abused that end of the building, it set up on the dark side of the sidewalk tunnel two bronze tablets in memoriam of the old State House and some of the events in its history. Surely it needed no placard, if left undisturbed. In like manner, Scipio Africanus, after his destruction of Carthage, set up a column in the midst of the desolation he had made, with the inscription, "Hic fuit Carthago," — here was Carthage.

The plans of the Transit Commission presaged a like fate for the west end, fronting Washington street, where an entrance and stairs leading down to the subway were to be carved out of this front, and front room. The Society of the Sons of the Revolution took the lead in opposing this scheme, appointed a committee, afterwards enlarged to a joint committee of the four societies of sons and daughters of the Revolution, which under the able leadership of William Sumner Appleton, protested, remonstrated with, and memorialized the Transit Commission for months without avail. But the patriotic societies became more and more aroused and indignant at the proposed desecration, — the Bostonian Society, the Societies of the Cincinnati, Colonial Wars, Colonial Dames, Loyal Legion, the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution at its national convention held in Boston last May, and many other societies and organizations including the Central Labor Union of Boston, protested in strong

and stirring resolutions, — patriotic citizens voiced the same sentiments, petitions were presented to and hearings had before the Governor in the State House, and the Mayor of Boston in the council chamber of the old State House, both these high officials, one representing the entire Commonwealth and the other the City of Boston, indorsed and upheld the patriotic demand, and at last under still greater pressure from Governor Curtis Guild, Jr., the Transit Commission voted to relinquish its iconoclastic plan.

But, gentlemen, while the commission has stayed its hand, it has not given up a particle of its power, and made no pledge for the future. In case of change of governor, or of the membership of the commission, under the plea of public demand for increased facilities which public service corporations know so well how to instigate, the commission could resume its design of using the west front and room for subway purposes. The work could be put through so quickly, the subway and platform beneath being all ready to receive the stairways, that the job would be done before the people had an opportunity to protest against it, or even to learn of it, until too late. The commission still holds the west room, in spite of repeated and urgent remonstrances, and we cannot but regard this fact as a very significant and suspicious circumstance as indicating some ulterior design.

Now, gentlemen, consider carefully and dispassionately these facts and see whether our distrust is not justified. Here is this front first floor room on the most eligible and valuable part of Washington street, which would bring a rental for business purposes of at least twelve thousand dollars a year. The commission keeps possession of it, using it only as an engineer's office. Equal accommodations for its employees could be found on some side street for less than one-tenth of what this is worth. To all remonstrances, letters from citizens, and resolutions of societies against such use, it turns a deaf ear. It pays no rent, makes no compensations for the use of the room. Can it be supposed that the commission would deprive the city of such valuable property only for the sake of reducing the cost of the subway a few hundred dollars, and diminishing the rental paid by the Elevated Railway Company a trifle? If not, what is the real reason, the ulterior motive?

This from the business and financial standpoint, the only one the commission respects. Taking the true and higher ground, its action is indefensible; it deserves severe rebuke and swift reversal. The intention and effort of the city to devote this room to memorial uses ought to be sustained. The west front will afford a dignified and fitting entrance, opening into a noble apartment, one admirably adapted for the main reception room and for the display of historical collections, paintings, etc.; from the rear access can be had to the central staircase, and the whole will be entirely separate and distinct from the subway uses and associations to which the east end has been so unfortunately debased.

In the name of the people not only of Massachusetts but of the whole country, in filial memory of the patriots who won for us the blessings of liberty, independence and free institutions, for the sake of the young manhood and young womanhood growing up in an age of commercialism, we appeal to the great and general court, the Supreme Legislative Body of the Commonwealth, to throw around this venerable building the protection of its power and the majesty of its law, that the vandal work of encroachment upon the historic monument may be stopped and never again attempted, and that it may be preserved forever, a memorial of the noble deeds of the past, an inspiration of the patriotism of the future.

Hon. John E. Fitzgerald, Mayor of Boston, said :

The city of Boston is in favor of this proposition. A committee of the patriotic societies waited on me at the City Hall, and I suggested that the State be brought into this matter, as the Commonwealth has a very vital interest in the preservation of this building. I might even say the matter is national in scope. We find thousands of people in other States and other countries who congratulate Bostonians on their protection of historic sites. I suggest a change in the second section of the bill by which the city of Boston and the Commonwealth are made joint conservators of the building, and the use by the Transit Commission may be limited to these changes now in force.

Let us hold what we have. We will not try to alter the present features, but we should preserve the appearance of the building and our other historic sites. The city of Boston should above all be loyal to our historic institutions.

GENERAL STEVENS.—The Society of the Sons of the Revolution took the lead in saving the old State House from the Transit Commission, and it is eminently fitting that the President of that Society, Mr. Eben Francis Thompson, should now address you.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE: The clear statement of General Stevens leaves little to be said further on behalf of the petitioners.

It is a strange situation that it should be necessary for us to come here to-day and ask for this legislation, for we ask you to save us from—ourselves. In no other country in the world would it be necessary, but so prosperous are we that materialism occupies the centre of the stage and larger and higher ends seem for a time to be entirely lost to sight.

While neither poverty of resources nor of engineering skill could be urged as a justifiable excuse for taking any portion of the old State House for the purposes of a private corporation, though it be engaged in a public service, we ask the preservation and restoration of what remains. The misuse of the building in previous generations gives no warrant for wrongdoing now. Boston has preserved none too many of her historic memorials, and it is a narrow and short-sighted policy that deliberately begins the destruction of the few that remain.

In European countries not only are such buildings preserved but even ruins are cared for and guarded. They object to the use of the word "Vandalism" as a characterization of what they have done and what they propose doing: The term is inaccurate and certainly unjust to the Vandals who confined their iconoclasm to the property of others. The Vandals, at least, respected and preserved their own.

Even the later Romans had a punning line in derision of the Barbarini family who despoiled the Colosseum in building their

palaces: "Quod Barbari non fecerunt, fecerunt Barbarini." What even Barbarians would not do the Barbarini did. Let it not be said that what the tooth of time had spared, the Boston Transit Commission would destroy piece-meal. Your enterprising and patriotic mayor is even now seeking to exploit the merits of Boston before the world. He cannot change her climate or give her coal and iron for her manufactures to compete with Pittsburg. It is only upon the high average of the character and intelligence of her people, their skill and industry, their public spirit, their just pride in her past as shown in their respect for and care of such buildings as the old State House, that Boston's mayor can predicate for her a place unique among the cities of this country. And we of the hamlet and the farm have a proprietary interest in these shrines of the past of which Boston is the trustee and the keeper. In this material age when the tide of prosperity runs high, we are too apt, I think, to lose sight of the higher ideals and to give undue weight to the question of present expenditure. But even if money is to be the standard, I believe that among the best assets of a better, busier and bigger Boston will be such structures unimpaired as the old State House.

In behalf of the society which I have the honor to represent I ask the report and passage of this bill.

Moses Greeley Parker, M.D., President Massachusetts Society, S.A.R., said:

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE: I appear before you representing the SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION in the matter of saving the OLD STATE HOUSE, as an Historic and Patriot Memorial, and prohibiting its use for any other purpose, as stated in Senate Bill No. 189.

Last June the Sons of the American Revolution held their Annual Congress here in Boston. The Congress consisted of Delegates from more than FORTY States, representing over seventeen thousand (17,000) members and over fifteen hundred (1,500) from Massachusetts.

When told that we were trying to save the OLD STATE HOUSE, they were so startled that Judge Stockbridge from

Maryland offered a resolution thanking all those that had assisted in saving the old State House and asking all to work for its continued safety. Over forty States voted for this resolution and the old State House was saved for a time.

Now we appear before you asking for the passage of Senate Bill No. 189, which we hope will pass and protect the old State House from further destruction or alteration.

I have here resolutions passed by four States' societies, namely, Massachusetts Society, S.A.R.; Maine Society, S.A.R.; New Hampshire, Paul Jones Club, S.A.R., and the Rhode Island Society S.A.R.

BOSTON, Feb. 22, 1907.

MOSES GREELEY PARKER, M.D., *President Massachusetts Society, S.A.R.*

DEAR SIR: At a meeting of the society held this day in Faneuil Hall, it was

Voted: That the Massachusetts Society, Sons of the American Revolution, is in sympathy with all other patriotic societies in their efforts to save the old State House, and wishes to express its desire that Senate Bill No. 189, now pending in the General Court of Massachusetts "to preserve the old State House as an historic and patriotic memorial and prohibit its use for any other purpose," will pass. The society also empowers its president to use his influence and appoint such committees of this society as will in his judgment aid in the passage of the bill.

The president appointed the following named as a committee: Charles F. Read, Edwin S. Crandon, Alfonso S. Harris.

Yours truly,

HERBERT W. KIMBALL,
Secretary pro tem.

MAINE SOCIETY, S.A.R.

PORTLAND, ME., Feb. 22, 1907.

DR. MOSES G. PARKER.

DEAR COMPATRIOT: The resolution was passed unanimously expressing our sympathy, with your and kindred interested societies, in your effort for the preservation of the old State House, in Boston, solely for historical and patriotic purposes. We hope the bill now pending in your General Court for that object may become a law.

This was the expression of the members of the Maine Society, S.A.R., at their annual meeting held to-day.

Yours respectfully,

NATHAN GOOLD,
Secretary.

THE PAUL JONES CLUB, S.A.R.
OFFICE OF SECRETARY,

PORTRSMOUTH, N.H., Feb. 16, 1907.

HON. MOSES G. PARKER, *President, Massachusetts Society, S.A.R., Boston, Massachusetts.*

MY DEAR COMPATRIOT: I beg to advise you that at a regular meeting of the Paul Jones Club, Sons of the American Revolution, of this city, holden on the 14th instant, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the Paul Jones Club, Sons of the American Revolution, of Portsmouth, N.H., is in sympathy with all patriotic societies in their efforts to preserve the old historic State House in Boston and wishes to express its desire that Senate Bill No. 189, now pending in the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, "To preserve the old State House as a Historic and Patriotic Memorial and to prohibit its use for any other purposes," will pass.

Very sincerely yours,

GEO. A. WOOD,
Secretary.

RHODE ISLAND SOCIETY, S.A.R.

PROVIDENCE, R.I., Feb. 22, 1907.

At the annual banquet of this society at the Narragansett Hotel, in this city, on the evening of Feb. 22, 1907, the following vote was unanimously adopted:

"Voted : That the Rhode Island Society of the Sons of the American Revolution is in sympathy with all Patriotic Societies in their efforts to preserve the Old Historic State House in Boston, and wish to express their desire that the Senate Bill No. 189, now pending in the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to preserve the Old State House as a Historic and Patriotic Memorial, and to prohibit its use for any other purpose, will pass."

A true Copy.

Attest:

CHRISTOPHER RHODES,
Secretary.

GENTLEMEN: We have but few old historic public buildings left. They are easily named. The most important are the Old North Church, the Old South Church, King's Chapel, Faneuil Hall, and the old State House. These we must protect from further destruction or alteration. Faneuil Hall and the old State House are the most important and must be preserved.

We ask you to assist us and to throw your strong official arms around this old State House and protect it by passing Senate Bill No. 189.

We ask you to save and protect this sacred historic building from further change,— save and protect it, not only for ourselves in Massachusetts but for the whole United States, and let the tens of thousands visit it bi-monthly as they do now. THIS is of great benefit to the city of Boston.

Finally, gentlemen of this committee, we ask you to save and preserve this old State House as an historic and patriotic memorial, there to remain so long as God shall save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mr. Joseph Grafton Minot, Governor of the Society of Colonial Wars, briefly advocated the bill in behalf of this society. Last spring it authorized him to appoint a committee of twenty-five to oppose any encroachment upon the old State House. The society had a membership of upwards of five hundred.

GENERAL STEVENS. — The Loyal Legion, which has a membership in this State of one thousand officers of the Civil War, at its last meeting, about three hundred and fifty being present, appointed a committee to appear before you to-day in support of this bill. The committee consists of Col. George A. Bruce, Col. Francis S. Hesseltine, and myself. Colonel Hesseltine bears the Congressional Medal of Honor, conferred for "most distinguished gallantry," is president of the New England Medal of Honor Legion, and will speak for the Loyal Legion.

COL. FRANCIS S. HESSELTINE. — No argument or multiplication of words is necessary to establish the desirability of preserving the old State House. It must be clear to the minds of this committee, as to every patriotic citizen who reveres the buildings and monuments of colonial and revolutionary times, that this old State House should not only be preserved but restored to its condition as it existed in colonial days. It ought not for any pecuniary gain to be altered and used for business purposes. If it was proposed for the needs of increased width of the entrance to State street from Washington street to remove the building entirely, the whole people would rise with indignation at the suggestion.

The City of Boston has at some expense replaced the Lion and the Unicorn, the emblems of old England, to restore it to its condition before the Revolution. The State and the city should unite to restore it fully to its original condition without regard to the expense or what may be gained or saved pecuniarily by its commercial use or destruction.

When asked by the chairman of the committee "Then you are not in favor of this bill which provides for its partial restoration?" Colonel Heseltine said, "I am in favor of its *complete* restoration to its original condition." If I had been one of the subway commissioners I should not have desecrated this building by altering its front on State street overlooking the place of the Boston Massacre; cellars and entrances to the subway could have been found nearby without any great expense to the city or to the Boston Elevated Railway.

If the building cannot be restored to its original condition and the subway entrance removed, then let its occupation by the commissioners or for business purposes end. Preserve all that remains sacredly for historical purposes. When the guides point out to the thousands who are visiting Boston to view its ancient historical places, they can point upward to what remains of the old State House and so far as possible veil the desecration of the entrance through the walls of the old State House to the subway.

Is its full restoration impossible? Must we, to save what another subway entrance would cost, suffer the old colonial State House to be changed and marred by these modern holes in its ancient walls?

Alice M. Granger, vice regent of the Society of the Daughters of the Revolution, Commonwealth of Massachusetts :

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN: I wish to call your attention for a few moments to the effect which the saving of the old State House forever from further desecration will have upon the youth of our Commonwealth.

Example is said to be a better teacher than precept, and to the young an object lesson is the best teacher of all, and when our boys and girls—ours to train for the good citizenship of the future—shall realize that busy, loyal, purposeful men and women are rallying about the old State House and are saying to the desecrating hand, “Hitherto shall thou come, but no further,” they can but be convinced that something lies back of it all. That it is not alone the old building—dear as it is to every American heart—but something for which it stands, which makes it sacred and that our Revolutionary landmarks, one and all, stand for a principle. Not for the old strife, not for the old victory, but for the Freedom, the Liberty, the Justice, the Equality for which the battle was fought and which through God’s grace our fathers forever won.

Chauncey M. Depew in an address upon the Political Mission of the United States, has said :

“Turn on the lights, teach first and last Americanism. Let no youth leave the school without being grounded in the history, the principles and the incalculable blessings of American Liberty. Let the boys be trained soldiers of constitutional freedom and the girls the intelligent mothers of freemen, and the sons of anarchists will become the bulwarks of the law.”

It is this true Americanism, this loyalty to and this reverence for principle, which we believe the saving of the old State House will teach and perpetuate.

Mrs. Estelle G. Weston, of the Daughters of the Revolution :

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE: It is unnecessary for me to take your time in reiterating what has

been said. I wish to read a resolution that was adopted at the meeting of the General Society, Daughters of the Revolution, held in Philadelphia, May, 1906.

Miss Hinton, of North Carolina, presented the following resolution deplored the desecration of the public buildings of the Revolutionary period: "Inasmuch as the patriotic hereditary societies of Massachusetts and others interested have made formal protest against the desecration of the old State House in Boston, and inasmuch as the members of this society would assist in safeguarding the few remaining public buildings of the Revolutionary period, in which they feel a sense of sentimental ownership, and for which they would help awaken a public spirit of appreciation and protection, be it Resolved, That we, the General Society, Daughters of the Revolution, in convention assembled, in the city of Philadelphia, endorse the remonstrances made by the Massachusetts Society, Daughters of the Revolution, and others, against the reconstruction and commercial usage of the old colonial building, from the outer balcony of which the Declaration of Independence was officially read to the people of Boston." This resolution was unanimously adopted and carried with it the protest from the following States:

Arizona, California, Dominion of Canada, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Long Island, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Philippine Islands, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

It is unnecessary for me, a native of Boston, to say anything more, after having presented a protest extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and from the Dominion of Canada to the Philippine Islands.

Mrs. Charles H. Masury, State Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution:

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is with real reluctance that I speak to-day, for I well know that this august committee agrees with the Apostle Paul when he says, "Oh, let the women keep silence all." But I should not be true to my trust as State Regent of the

Daughters of the American Revolution of Massachusetts, if I did not add my protest to those already before you. Our constitution gives as an object of the Society the preservation of "Historic Spots" and if we live up to that constitution we must do all in our power to help to save the "Old State House." Little do the women know of transit commissions or subway construction, but we do know that the old historic buildings of Boston must be preserved, and that a way can be found, even if a stay is put upon the rapid transit. We do not care much to go in the "heavens above or the earth beneath," but most women like best to tread on the earth; the surface service best pleases them, and therefore they dare to plead for a slower, safer, sounder Boston.

We are told of the enormous cost if the State House is to be preserved intact. But shall Boston bow the knee to commercialism when these precious relics of the past are threatened with destruction? Where is the boasted wealth of our Boston? If her men will allow this, then the women must come to the rescue.

When the D. A. R., in Congress assembled in Washington, listen to the roll call of Chapters, representing fifty thousand women in the country and five thousand in Massachusetts, when in the roll call the names of Concord and Lexington, Bunker Hill and Faneuil Hall, Old South Church and Boston Tea Party are called, a delegate from the far West says, "We have our chapters named for the places, but you the real places."

What then shall we say to these same friends, maybe, when they return next July to their native State for Old Home Week and find them either gone or so mutilated by the hand of progress that they are hardly recognizable? It is no idle boast that the women can help save the glory of the past, for when the monument at Bunker Hill stood uncompleted for years it was the women of New England who came to the rescue and finished it, and when the capstone alone was needed, it was the dancing feet of the famous Fannie Eisler who, we are told, "danced" the capstone on Bunker Hill Monument; and who saved Mount Vernon but the women of the United States? We therefore, gentlemen, beg you, in the name of the men whose service for liberty made this country possible, save the building made sacred

by their presence in the days gone by, and listen with favor to us when we plead for "The ashes of our fathers and the temples of our God."

Mr. Max H. Newman read resolutions passed by the boys of the Parker Memorial, representing all nationalities, against encroachment on historical buildings, and made an earnest and eloquent address in support of the measure.

Mrs. William Lee, representing six patriotic societies, *viz.* : *National Society of the Founders and Patriots of America*, State Society of the same, *National Society of the Daughters of the War of 1812*, *Daughters of the Revolution for Massachusetts*, of which she was the founder and first regent, *Bunker Hill Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution*, *Peter Faneuil Chapter*, *Daughters of the Revolution* :

Every room in the old State House is filled with sacred memories. Upstairs in the Council Chamber Samuel Adams demanded of Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson the immediate removal from the town of all the troops. In the same room eight years before James Otis argued against the writs of assistance. Here is seen the council table and here one can read for himself the stirring records.

In the Representative Hall at the other end of the building was first heard the demands for traditional self-government without interference of lords of admiralty or boards of trade. Here in this building John Adams said American independence was born. From the State street balcony was read the Declaration of Independence when a copy reached the town. And from the other end Washington reviewed the procession in his honor in 1789. Here the State government organized in 1780, and had its seat until the new building on Beacon Hill was ready for occupancy. Here in 1835 William Lloyd Garrison took refuge from the furious mob that wanted to kill him for protecting the negro and for his abolition sentiments.

That building stands to-day sentinel over the past, and the present's watchman over those treasured memories for posterity and the future. Gentlemen, you cannot to-day see Samuel Adams, but look upon this citizens' committee moved by his spirit of patriotism, petitioning the removal from the old State House of all that menaces its historic perpetuity, and surely, honorable sirs, we will not have to plead in vain for that filial affection which should cause the new State House to love and venerate its mother, the old State House, as a child venerates its parent and protects her old age.

General Stevens submitted a statement showing the measures taken in other countries for the preservation of ancient buildings and monuments.

The chairman called for remonstrants. No one appeared, thereupon he requested those in favor of the bill to rise, and the whole assembly stood up.

The hearing was then closed.

The Society of the Cincinnati formally approved the bill, and its assistant secretary, Mr. Arthur G. Everett, wrote the committee to that effect. The Society designated one of its leading members, Mr. Gamaliel Bradford, to represent it before the committee, but he was unable to be present.

Hon. Winslow Warren, President-General of the National Society of the Cincinnati, and President of the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, sent the following letter:

"I regret that my departure to-morrow for California will prevent my being present at any hearing there may be upon the bill for the preservation of the old State House and other historic buildings. They are valuable historical assets of the city of Boston and the growing interest in them, especially in visitors to the city, is very marked.

Philadelphia has done well in restoring Independence Hall to its exact original condition. I wish it were possible to do the same to the old State

House, for not even Independence Hall equals it in historic associations — Otis, Adams, Barnard, Hutchinson, Hancock, and hosts of others are connected with it, and a building which heard the argument of writs of assistance should be forever a monument. It may be too late to restore it as it should be, but at least further damage may be prevented there and at the same time steps taken to preserve other historic buildings.

Trusting that the bill will find support from patriotic members of the Legislature, I am,

Very truly yours,

WINSLOW WARREN."

Governor Guild's position is best expressed in his own words in the following letter, which was read at the hearing last April in the old State House before the Mayor of Boston.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,

BOSTON, April 27, 1906.

DEAR GENERAL STEVENS:

An unusual press of executive business and duties in connection with the California disaster has delayed consideration of the appeal presented to me some days ago by the various historical societies protesting through you against the utilization of the Washington street front of the old State House for a subway station.

You will remember that I suggested that, having conferred with me, you also confer with His Honor the Mayor of Boston, since three members of the transit commission are appointed by the Mayor and two are appointed by the Governor.

As far as I am concerned you are at entire liberty to say that I heartily sympathize with your protest.

We have few enough monuments of the splendid past of city and commonwealth. Speaking for the authority responsible for the minority of the commission in question I feel that an engineering problem which is capable of simplification should not be allowed to stand in the way of the preservation of a monument so replete in every part with historic association, especially when the front threatened is that which bears the shield of Massachusetts.

It seems to me, moreover, that every part of this building should be devoted permanently to strictly memorial and historical purposes.

Very cordially yours,

CURTIS GUILD, JR.

From "Boston Globe," May 9, 1906:

The last meeting of the Bostonian Society before October was held yesterday afternoon in the old State House, the most important transaction being a unanimous vote of the members present that the society is unalterably opposed to any further occupancy of the old State House by the Rapid Transit Commission.

The action was recommended by the board of directors through Rev. Fr. Bodfish, who has been particularly active in the movement to preserve the building as it is. The vote is in line with those adopted by different patriotic societies.

Fr. Bodfish incidentally remarked that it was desirable to correct a somewhat prevalent impression that the Bostonian Society has at any time favored any other use of the building than that of a historical monument.

SAVING HISTORIC MONUMENTS.

Now that legislation is urged seeking to protect the old State House against future vandalism, it is interesting to note the action of other countries in preserving ancient and artistic monuments and works of art in which some of these are so rich.

In Rome a commission of fine arts is charged with this duty. Individuals are prohibited from demolishing or damaging ancient monuments, even on private property, and throughout Italy are forbidden to sell paintings and other works of art to be exported without the permission of the proper authorities. The Italian Government is now preparing a general catalogue with descriptions and photographs of all ancient historical buildings.

In Greece there is an inspector-general of antiquities. All persons are forbidden to destroy, alter, or even repair in any manner, ruins, or any kind of ancient monuments without special permission of this official, who is authorized to undertake necessary repairs at the expense of the State. No person is allowed to quarry stones or erect lime kilns within 500 meters of any ancient building, or to do anything to endanger such, even though private property. And statues, vases, etc., found on private property, are assumed to belong to the State unless the contrary is shown, and none of the art treasures may be exported without governmental permission.

In Austria an Imperial and Royal Central Commission for the Investigation and Preservation of Artistic and Historical Monuments sits at Vienna, and is assisted by conservators and correspondents in the provinces. In France, under the direction of the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, all historical buildings and monuments have been scheduled and placed under the protection of a Commission of Historical Monuments.

Spain, monuments have enjoyed the protection of the State from an early date. A commission in each province, dependent on the Royal Academies of History and Fine Arts in Madrid, is charged with this duty.

Bavaria, Board of Trustees of Bavarian Artistic and Ancient Monuments, six members, of whom four are authorities on the history of art, one an architect and one an artist.

Belgium, Royal Commission on Monuments, consisting of a central committee of twelve at Brussels and for each province a committee of correspondents at the chief town presided over by the governor of the province, 186,000 francs voted annually for the preservation and restoration of monuments, etc. In the Netherlands large sums are annually appropriated for restoration and repair under the Department of Arts and Sciences.

Switzerland makes an annual grant of 50,000 francs for the acquisition and preservation of national monuments under the Federal Commission for the Preservation of Swiss Antiquities. Saxony has Commission for the Preservation of Monuments. Denmark has Royal Commission with an annual grant.

In Sweden and Norway the law provides that "all fixed remains which preserve the memory of the ancient architects of the country are placed under the protection of the law and may not be injured nor destroyed by the owner of the land," etc.

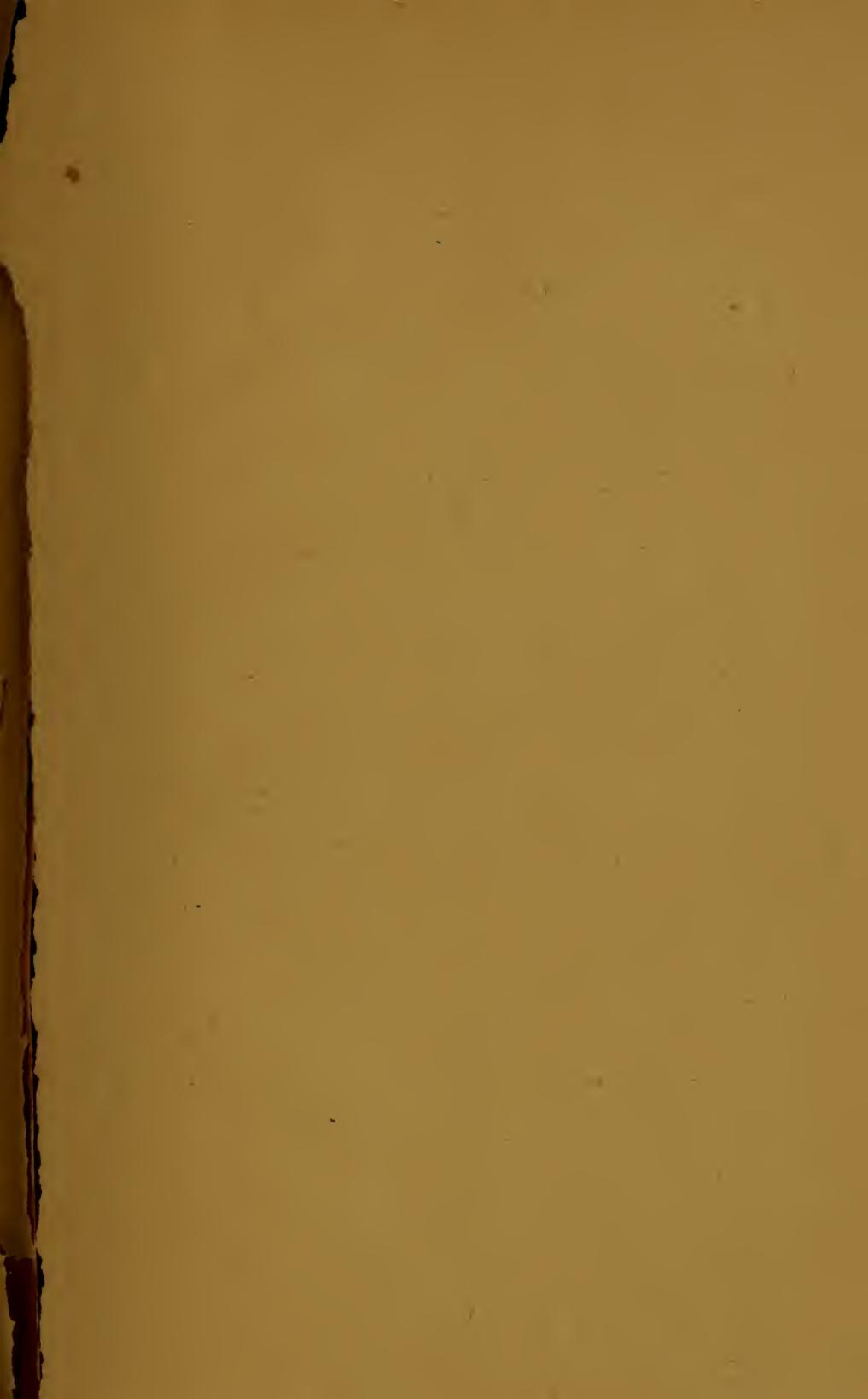
Thus it appears that in these countries ancient buildings and monuments and works of art are placed under the protection of stringent laws, some of them encroaching upon private rights of property in a way that would be unconstitutional in this country, and commissions whose members are the first historians, architects, and artists, and with liberal grants of money from the State. In the United States, too, patriotic citizens have taken the lead in this work. Independence Hall in Philadelphia has

been completely restored and dedicated as a patriotic memorial of the Declaration of Independence. Valley Forge and Washington's Headquarters have been purchased and preserved by the State of Pennsylvania.

New York has secured Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh and a monument at Saratoga. Fraunce's Tavern in New York City, the scene of many revolutionary events, and where Washington laid down his commission as Commander-in-Chief at the close of the Revolutionary War, has been purchased and restored by the Society of the Sons of the Revolution at a cost of \$140,000. In New Jersey the battlefield of Monmouth and Washington's Headquarters at Morristown have been purchased, partly by State funds and partly by private contributions. The State grants \$2,500 a year for their care. The State has also contributed most of the funds for the battlefield monument, costing \$50,000. Ohio exercises control over places of historic interest, Forts Recovery and Defiance, the Eagle Earthworks in Licking County, and Fort Ancient in Warren County, the latter two prehistoric earthworks of the mound builders. She maintains an archæological and historical society for the preservation of historical monuments.

The United States Government has erected monuments to Washington, to Washington's mother, one to mark his birthplace, a noble shaft to commemorate and mark the surrender of the British Army under Cornwallis at Yorktown, numerous statues in Washington to Revolutionary worthies and men distinguished in the forum and the field subsequently, and has set apart as national parks and suitably cared for the fields of the great battles of Antietam, Gettysburg, and Chickamauga. Mt. Vernon, the home of Washington and his tomb, the finest shrine of all, was saved and restored by the patriotic women of America.

Massachusetts has not been behind her sister States in this filial and sacred duty. Bunker Hill Monument, the first, finest, and most celebrated of all the Revolutionary mementoes, the reservations of ground, the monuments and statues at Concord and Lexington, the Civil War monuments in nearly every city and town, the Old South Church and Paul Revere Home, saved by private contributions, all attest her reverence and pride in her glorious past.







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